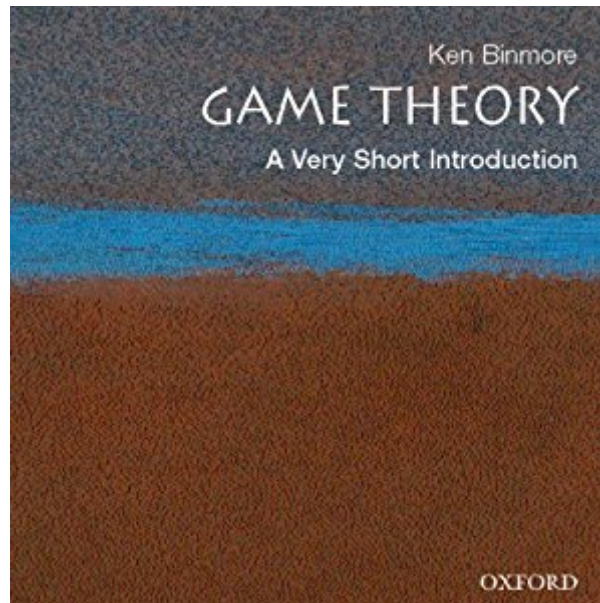




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Game Theory: A Very Short Introduction



Synopsis

Games are everywhere: Drivers maneuvering in heavy traffic are playing a driving game. Bargain hunters bidding on eBay are playing an auctioning game. The supermarket's price for corn flakes is decided by playing an economic game. This Very Short Introduction offers a succinct tour of the fascinating world of game theory, a groundbreaking field that analyzes how to play games in a rational way. Ken Binmore, a renowned game theorist, explains the theory in a way that is both entertaining and non-mathematical yet also deeply insightful, revealing how game theory can shed light on everything from social gatherings, to ethical decision-making, to successful card-playing strategies, to calculating the sex ratio among bees. With mini biographies of many fascinating, and occasionally eccentric, founders of the subject - including John Nash, subject of the movie *A Beautiful Mind* - this audiobook offers a concise overview of a cutting-edge field that has seen spectacular successes in evolutionary biology and economics, and is beginning to revolutionize other disciplines from psychology to political science.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

If this book was designed to be read by students of economics, I'd say it's a great nontechnical explanation of Game Theory. Fortunately for me, I am a grad student in economics and have studied economic theory pretty intensely for the past few years. I think the author does a good job of explaining the ideas covered in normal game theory courses and explaining the ideas in nontechnical language. I would recommend this to anybody studying economics/game theory

(undergrads, grad students, profs, researchers). Sometimes we get lost in all of the mathematics of game theory and I think it's a good explanation of what we study in everyday language. However, I would probably not recommend this to people who do not formally study game theory. Some of the author's explanations are terse or convoluted. Since I formally study this stuff, I typically understand what he's trying to say, even if his explanation is not great. I can't imagine his explanations being sufficient for the everyday reader.

This book deserves a much higher score than it's received. The reason why it has such an even distribution between 1-5 stars is that Binmore's book is written for a person who doesn't necessarily know much about game theory but is reasonably well read in other fields related to game theory. This is what allows Binmore to write such a short book on this complex field. A good way to mitigate this problem in reading the book is to also read the VSIs on Causation, Social Psychology, Risk, Networks, Statistics, Information and Probability.

This is not a replacement for an academic level textbook, nor is it recommended for readers looking for some fluffy hand wavy book of charming non-mathematical anecdotes. If you are a math/cs/statistics/engineering graduate looking for some lightweight technical reading to expand your understanding, this is a very good book.

Confusing - striving to simplify, this book does not really deliver what's necessary to understand the topic

Nice combination of professional and applied writings. How math or probability can be applied to games and evolutionary theories is the power of the book.

LOST ME AT THE NASH EQUILIBRIUM, THAT WAS NOT EXPLAINED AT ALL!

I avoid writing negative reviews, but am willing to do so when there is a need to warn other readers about wasting time and money on a book. This book presents one such occasion. The problem is simply that this book works very poorly as an introduction. The early parts of the book fail to provide the lay of the land, definitions of terms are unclear, many topics are poorly explained, and all sorts of necessary details are missing. I see that another reviewer loved the book, but I also get the impression that this reviewer already has some background in game theory (which I don't). Readers

with that background might find this book to be a fun and breezy review since they can fill in the missing content but, again, the problem is that this book purports to be an introduction. Lest anyone think that the real problem was that this book was over my head, I'll just note that I'm an engineer, and I've done fine with plenty of books dealing with math, science, and other analytic subjects, many of which are a good bit more advanced than Binmore's. I had to cut my losses and abandon this book about a third of the way through, and I'll now be looking again for a game theory book which is genuinely a proper introduction. After reading such a book, perhaps I'll come back to Binmore's book and see if I can get more out of it.

From Binmore I expected more quality material. He is best in writing difficult subjects in simple and clear language. This one is written clearly but simple material.

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